

XPART IN 2014

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Rover parts, or the new low volumes now needed were too low for their economics.

The following two years certainly saw a volatile period as existing parts stocks were exhausted and new suppliers had to be found. XPart has to be given credit for the high number of new parts suppliers and the level of parts they managed to achieve. Not everything can be re-sourced as some have such small demand that it is simply uneconomic for XPart to be able to support, but the mid 90% parts availability achieved has been good for most owners.

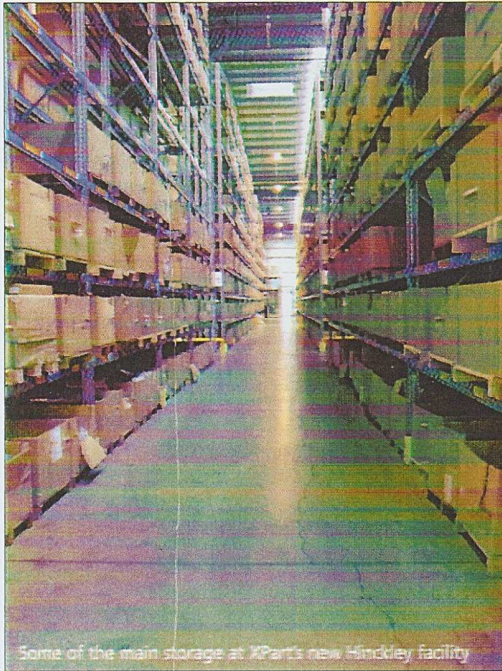
XPart has to be congratulated for very quickly setting up an alternative dealer network to replace the collapsed MG Rover one to try and provide some continuity for then new MG and Rover car owners. The XPart Autoservice Centre network remains very active with over 200 centres UK wide. With a significant number of MG and Rover owners in mainland Europe we often receive requests where they can get repairs or parts from in their respective countries, and once again XPart have a European network. It is worth noting that both UK and European networks can see parts delivered within 24 hours.

The simplest way to find where you can get parts or service from an XPart centre or part supplier is to visit www.xpart.com where you will find links to 'MG Rover Original Parts', 'Autoservice Centres' and 'European Autoservice Centres'. One of the most useful features is that once you click on the appropriate link there is a locator function to enable you to quickly locate the nearest centre or parts supplier once you have input your postcode or location name. Where there are a number of centres/parts suppliers within a reasonable distance, they are shown in order of distance with appropriate location and contact details.

Whilst on the subject of website links I will also give a brief mention to www.mgroverpartfinder.com where if you know the part number of a part you are looking for, you can input the number and the system will check all the XPart outlets and bring up the details of those who hold stock of that part. Very useful for some more obscure parts that may well have sat on shelves for some years.

I mentioned earlier that XPart have recently moved, and this was from the shared facilities with Land Rover and Cat Logistics at Desford in Leicestershire to a new dedicated facility in Hinckley around 10 miles away. In these new compact premises where there is no direct sharing of space and the admin staff are much more integrated with the warehouse staff, there is the opportunity to be able to focus on their core business with sufficient space to have adequate stock levels and maintain the record of the company having always been profitable, a necessary part of being able to invest in the future. The various images inside the new warehouse show some of the parts stock.

In 2012 Cat Logistics sold a controlling stake in XPart to a company called Neovia and at the time of writing it is reported that Neovia is being bought by Goldman Sachs and Rhone Equity after outbidding a rival group. Quite what this means for the future we will have to wait and see as these things are inevitably more complex, but the interest shown by others in their attempts to buy does tend to show that they see value in the company.



Some of the main storage at XPart's new Hinckley facility



Bulkier and fragile items have their own dedicated storage



Small-boxed items

Longer standing members will recall the collapse of MG Rover in early April 2005 and the tenth anniversary of this is rapidly approaching in April 2015. One of the most immediate effects of the collapse was that many owners and prospective owners of MG and Rover cars believed that the spares supply for these cars would collapse with MG Rover. Of course hindsight proves this to be very far from the case and to help alleviate this negative perception we published a feature in the September 2005 issue of *Enjoying MG* on the rude health of XPart, the official parts supplier since 2002 for MG and Rover parts. (Those with an interest in the feature can access it via the 'Members Area' and 'Publications' section of the Club website and look for the title 'Parts for MG and Rover Cars'.)

For those who are not familiar with XPart, it was the MG and Rover parts supply operation created by MG Rover, and was one of the many companies within the MG Rover group named with an X prefix, XPower is perhaps the best known that was the MG Sporting brand. XPart took over from Unipart, probably a name many will know and who had been the MG and Rover parts supplier for many years. Since separating from the MG and Rover parts responsibility the Unipart car parts business was sold in 2011 and that specific element actually went into Administration in July 2014 although the Unipart Group continues to trade in other areas.

Against this background, an ownership change and a recent move by XPart to new dedicated premises in Hinckley, it is a prudent time to focus a little attention on XPart and once again confirm that it is still continuing to supply original quality parts for MG and Rover cars, although not the current MG3 and MG6 that are serviced from Longbridge.

In 2004 XPart was sold to Cat Logistics but retained their responsibility to supply the MG and Rover original parts. When MG Rover collapsed in 2005 this left XPart with a series of big problems, the first of which was to get the message to owners and the motor trade that they were alive and well and committed to continue the parts supply.

This did create some serious problems as whilst they had legal access to all drawings and parts suppliers; with MG Rover owing £1.4 billion to creditors, many of whom were parts suppliers, many of these were not keen to continue making the MG and